(b) whether Government propose to convince Sri Lankan Government to realise the fact that only an autonomous Elam within the framework of Sri Lankan constitution could be the solution to the ethnic crisis, prevailing in Sri Lanka, if so, what steps have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) and (b) Government believe that effective devolution of powers to the Provincial Councils to enable Tamils to have effective autonomy within a united Sri Lanka, offers a durable solution to the ethnic conflict. In keeping with this approach, over the last 3 months, Government have been urging Sri Lankan Government to meet its commitments under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and to take early steps to expedite devolution of powers. Government have also made efforts to bring an end to internecine fighting among Tamil militant groups.

Withdrawal of IPKF from Sri Lanka

160. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of Indian Peace Keeping Force personnel withdrawn from Sri Lanka till date;

(b) the time by when the entire IPKF is to be withdrawn; and

(c) whether any agreement has been reached with Sri Lanka in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) As the final phase of the de-induction process is underway it is not possible to indicate precise numbers at any one stage. However, keeping the logistical and other factors in mind, it is expected that de-induction will be completed by end—March, 1990. This has been communicated to the Sri Lanka Government.

Acquiring national dailies and magazines by the industrial houses

161. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRI VISHWASRAO
RAM RAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the industrial houses are acquiring national dailies and magazines; if so, what is the number of national dailies and magazines which changed hands since 1st January, 1989 to 31st March, 1990;

(b) whether Government are aware of the serious and subtle threats to democracy due to industrial tycoons entering in a big way in the opinion formation and power of the electronic media; and

(c) whether there is any long term policy evolved to control the industrial houses from acquiring control other media?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): (a) The Government takes note of changes of ownership whenever intimated by the publishers as required under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867. As per records maintained in the Office of Registrar of Newspapers for India two dailies and the magazines changed hands during the period from 1.1.1989 to 9.3.1990.

(b) Change of ownership of newspapers is permitted under the law. The Government does not think that this phenomenon is likely to threaten the democratic system in the country. Industrial houses are not allowed to interfere in the functioning of electronic media.

(c) No policy is being evolved for the print media. For the electronic media steps for providing autonomy are being taken ensuring that indus-

trial houses will not be able to interfere in the functioning of the electronic media.

Municipal Press, M.C.D.

162. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1032 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 27th July, 1989 and state what are the details of the newly-created posts in each category i.e. Key Board Operator, Machine Operator, Machine Attendants, Platemakers and Dark-room Assisant due to computerisation of Municipal Press and what action has been taken/is being taken to fill up all the newly-created posts?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): No new posts have been created in these categories.

Spurt in Terrorists activities in Punjab

163. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been alarming spurt in the terrorist activities in Punjab during the last two months, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the number of persons killed by the terrorists in Punjab during the first two months of the current year?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) According to information available 126 and 95 persons were killed by terrorists in Punjab in January and February, 1990 respectively.

Plan to introduce car telephones

164. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revive the plan to introduce Car telephones in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the plan?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Foreign media-men in Srinagar

165. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some foreign-media persons were asked to leave Srinagar in the last week of January, 1990;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a Delhi-based correspondent of the BBC went underground in Srinagar on January 25 and continued to file his despatches from his hide-out; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): (a) to (d) Information still awaited from the State Government.

Pakistan's lobbying with USA Government on Kashmir issue

166. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the officials of Pakistan Government are lobbying with USA Government to secure support for their Government's stand on Kashmir issue; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir.